UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/005,813	12/07/2001	Sayling Wen	3313-0436P-SP	9414

			EXAMINER
2292	7590	11/22/2005	ALBERTALLI, BRIAN LOUIS

BIRCH STEWART KOLASCH & BIRCH
PO BOX 747
FALLS CHURCH, VA 22040-0747

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2655	

DATE MAILED: 11/22/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

PTO-90C (Rev. 10/03)

	Application No.	Applicant(s)
Office Action Summary	10/005,813	WEN ET AL.
	Examiner	**Art Unit**	
	Brian L. Albertalli	2655	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE <u>3</u> MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on <u>*07 December 2001*</u>.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**.   2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-17* is/are pending in the application.

    4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-17* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

    Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

    Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

    a)☐ All   b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

        1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

        2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

        3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

    * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1)☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2)☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3)☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

4)☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.

5)☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6)☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1.   The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all

obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set
> forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and
> the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the
> invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains.
> Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

2.   Claims 1, 7-9, 11-15, and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being

unpatentable over Guinan (U.S. Patent 6,022,222), in view of Ligozat et al. (*How to*

Visualize Time, Tense, and Aspect?).

In regard to claim 1, Guinan discloses a multimedia-aided verb tense teaching

system applied in a computer executable hardware platform (workstation, Fig. 25),

which comprises:

a language knowledge database for storing verb tense-related multimedia data

(Fig. 11, resources 66), including:

a grammar rule database which stores verb tense data and tense codes (lesson

data, column 6, lines 52-59; lessons include lessons about verb tense lessons, see Fig.

10, column 6, lines 26-36);

an animation database which stores animation data and animation codes

(graphic resource files, column 6, lines 52-59); and

an animation correspondence table, which stores correspondences between

entries in the grammar rule database and entries in the animation database (see Fig.

11, graphic resources are linked to the lesson data files, furthermore, in Fig. 10, the

textual lesson data is displayed with the corresponding graphic file, see column 5, line 63 to column 6, line 8);

Guinan further discloses that verb tenses are related to time (each verb's conjugation is based on the time, e.g. past, present, future, etc., column 6, lines 9-19; and displaying different animations corresponding to the different times/tenses aids the user in learning verb tenses, column 5, line 63 to column 6, line 1).

Guinan does not disclose:

a time unit for storing correspondences between verb tense data in the language knowledge database and time; and

a processing unit, which receives a time-related command from a user and, according to the processing result from the time unit, reads and plays the corresponding verb data and multimedia data.

Ligozat et al. disclose a system for teaching verb tenses utilizing the notion of relating tenses to time (page 477, section 3, 3rd paragraph), comprising:

a time unit for storing correspondences between verb tense data in the language knowledge database and time (set of elements for translating time related icons into tense, page 478, section 5, 1st paragraph); and

a processing unit, which receives a time-related command from a user and, according to the processing result from the time unit, reads and plays the corresponding verb data (the user manipulates the representation of time to represent the temporal structure of a given situation, and the corresponding verb tense is generated, page 479, section 5.2).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of

invention to modify Guinan to allow the user to input a time-related command and

generate the corresponding verb multimedia data to teach verb tenses, because

students generally have difficultly learning tenses, especially when learning a new

language for which there is no equivalent tense in their native language, and visualizing

time as it relates to tense allows the user to associate tenses with concrete actions, as

taught by Ligozat et al. (page 478, section 4.1, 1st paragraph and page 481, section 7).

Furthermore, modifying Guinan to read and play verb data corresponding to a time-

related command from a user would necessarily also cause Guinan to read and play

multimedia data, since the verb data in Guinan is related to multimedia data and verb

data is played with multimedia data (as in Fig. 10, see column 5, line 63 to column 6,

line 8).

In regard to claim 7, Guinan discloses the animation database further comprises:

a tense animation database, which stores a plurality of tense animation data (Fig.

11, graphic resources files, column 6, lines 52-59); and

an animation code list, which stores codes corresponding to the tense animation

data (Fig. 11, the actual file names of the graphic resource files, e.g. he.bmp, she.bmp,

etc.).

In regard to claim 8, Guinan discloses the tense animation data include simple

present tense animation data (Fig. 10, 56, column 6, lines 14-16), simple future tense

animation data (58, column 6, lines 17-18), future progressive tense animation data

(future continuous 60, column 6, lines 23-26), present progressive tense animation data

(present continuous 60, column 6, lines 23-26), present perfect tense animation data

(59 present perfect, column 6, lines 20-23), and simple past tense animation data (57,

column 6, lines 16-17).

In regard to claim 9, Guinan disclose the codes stored in the animation code list

(the names of the graphic files) are used for the animation correspondence table to

establish correspondences (the graphic resources are stored as standard variables to

be called by the executable, executables use the file name to access the graphic data

contained in the file, column 6, lines 52-67).

In regard to claim 11, Guinan disclose the user directly connects to the system

(Fig. 25, on computer 66, column 4, lines 30-34).

In regard to claim 12, Guinan disclose the verb tense-related multimedia data

stored in the language knowledge database includes sounds (Fig. 11, voice resource

files), pictures (graphic resource files), and texts (lesson data, column 6, lines 52-59).

In regard to claim 13, Guinan disclose a multi-media verb tense teaching method

applied in a computer executable hardware platform, which comprises the steps off:

reading multimedia related to verb tenses (from resource files 66, column 6, lines 52-59); and

playing the multimedia data (tense is represented through icons and voice output, column 5, lines 48-53 and column 5, line 63 to column 6, line 25).

Guinan further discloses that verb tenses are related to time (each verb's conjugation is based on the time, e.g. past, present, future, etc., column 6, lines 9-19; and displaying different animations corresponding to the different times/tenses aids the user in learning verb tenses, column 5, line 63 to column 6, line 1).

Guinan does not disclose accepting time related commands to retrieve tense multimedia data corresponding to the time command input from a user.

Ligozat et al. disclose a system for teaching verb tenses utilizing the notion of relating tenses to time (page 477, section 3, 3rd paragraph), comprising:

establishing relations between verb tense-related data and a time unit (translations of time representational icons to tense related data, page 478, section 5, 1st paragraph);

receiving a command input from a user (user positions icon on time axis relative to the point of speech, page 479, section 5.2, 1st paragraph);

determining time corresponding to the command (generate corresponding tense, page 479, section 5.2, 2nd paragraph); and

playing the verb tense data (the tense that is generated is displayed for the user, see Fig. 8).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of

invention to modify Guinan to establish relations between verb-tense related multimedia

data and a time unit in order to allow the user to input a time-related command and

generate the corresponding verb multimedia data to teach verb tenses, because

students generally have difficultly learning tenses, especially when learning a new

language for which there is no equivalent tense in their native language, and visualizing

time as it relates to tense allows the user to associate tenses with concrete actions, as

taught by Ligozat et al. (page 478, section 4.1, 1st paragraph and page 481, section 7).

Furthermore, modifying Guinan to read and play verb data corresponding to a time-

related command from a user would necessarily also cause Guinan to read and play

multimedia data, since the verb data in Guinan is related to multimedia data and verb

data is played with multimedia data (as in Fig. 10, see column 5, line 63 to column 6,

line 8).

In regard to claim 14, Guinan disclose the verb tense-related multimedia data

stored in the language knowledge database includes sounds (Fig. 11, voice resource

files), pictures (graphic resource files), and texts (lesson data, column 6, lines 52-59).

In regard to claim 15, Guinan does not disclose the command is a correction the

user does to the time unit.

Ligozat et al. disclose allowing the user to correct a time unit (see Fig. 8, an

original time command produces the sentence in 8(a); then the user can add the

adverbial "last year" as a marker of reference through the time axis representation to generate the sentence in 8(b), page 479,section 5.2, 2nd paragraph to page 480, 1st column, 1st paragraph).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to allow the user to correct the time unit, so the user could understand how a change in time related point of speech affects the tense of a given sentence.

In regard to claim 17, Guinan disclose the user directly connects to the system (Fig. 25, on computer 66, column 4, lines 30-34).

3.　　　Claims 2-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Guinan, in view of Ligozat et al., and further in view of Hemphill et al. (U.S. Patent 5,218,537).

In regard to claim 2, Guinan discloses the grammar rule database further comprises:

a tense database, which stores a plurality of tense data (lesson data, column 6, lines 52-59; lessons include lessons about verb tense lessons, see Fig. 10, column 6, lines 26-36); and

a tense code list, which stores codes of the tense data (Fig. 11, the actual file names of the lesson data, lesson01.dat, lesson02.dat, etc.).

Neither Guinan nor Ligozat et al. disclose a tense rule description database, which stores description data corresponding to the tense data.

Hemphill et al. disclose a system for teaching tenses that includes a tense rule description database, which stores description data corresponding to the tense data (Fig. 3, grammar lexicon 31 includes verb tense rules, column 5, lines 16-25).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to further modify the combination of Guinan and Ligozat to include a tense rule description database, so that a student could be given the reasoning behind why an answer they supplied was incorrect (i.e. the tense rule description), as taught by Hemphill et al. (column 8, lines 22-33).

In regard to claim 3, Guinan discloses the tense animation data include simple present tense data (Fig. 10, 56, column 6, lines 14-16), simple future tense data (58, column 6, lines 17-18), future progressive tense data (future continuous 60, column 6, lines 23-26), present progressive tense data (present continuous 60, column 6, lines 23-26), present perfect tense data (59 present perfect, column 6, lines 20-23), and simple past tense data (57, column 6, lines 16-17).

In regard to claim 4, while Guinan does not disclose tense rule description data and Hemphill et al. do not disclose specifically which tenses are described in the tense rules, modifying Guinan and Ligozat et al. to include tense rule descriptions would necessarily include simple present tense description data, simple future tense description data, future progressive tense description data, present progressive tense description data, present perfect tense description data, and simple past tense

description data, since Guinan discloses these are among the available tenses for verb

tense teaching (in Fig. 10, 56, column 6, lines 14-16; 58, column 6, lines 17-18; future

continuous 60, column 6, lines 23-26; present continuous 60, column 6, lines 23-26; 59

present perfect, column 6, lines 20-23; and 57, column 6, lines 16-17, respectively.

In regard to claim 5, neither Guinan nor Ligozat et al. disclose the tense data are

grammar example sentences corresponding to all tenses.

Hemphill et al. disclose giving the student example sentences for all tenses

(grammar lexicon 31 includes a lexicon for generating sentences according to verb

tense rules, column 5, lines 16-25; each lesson includes an example sentence to teach

the corresponding rule, see Figs. 4a-4c and column 6, lines 1-3).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of

invention to further modify the combination of Guinan and Ligozat et al. to include

grammar example sentences corresponding to all tenses, so that the user could

understand the correct usage of a given verb tense as used in a real sentence.

In regard to claim 6, Guinan disclose the codes stored in the animation code list

(the names of the graphic files) are used for the animation correspondence table to

establish correspondences (the graphic resources are stored as standard variables to

be called by the executable, executables use the file name to access the graphic data

contained in the file, column 6, lines 52-67).

4.   Claims 10 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable

over Guinan, in view of Ligozat et al., and further in view of Official Notice.

Neither Guinan nor Ligozat et al. disclose the user connects to the system via the

Internet.

Official notice is taken that it is notoriously well known in the art to connect to

programs via the Internet, so that user's can access the program from any location in

the world.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of

invention to further modify the combination of Guinan and Ligozat et al. to allow a user

to connect via the Internet, so a user could access the program from anywhere in the

world.

Conclusion

5.   The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to

applicant's disclosure. Groiss (U.S. Patent 5,735,693), Tamura et al. (5,885,081), Block

et al. (U.S. Patent 6,305,942), and Budra et al. (U.S. Patent 6,726,486), disclose

computer methods for teaching verb tense. Lecky (U.S. Patent 1,367,192) discloses a

verb tense teaching system that includes illustrations to demonstrate the time/tense

relationship.

6.   Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the

examiner should be directed to Brian L. Albertalli whose telephone number is (571) 272-
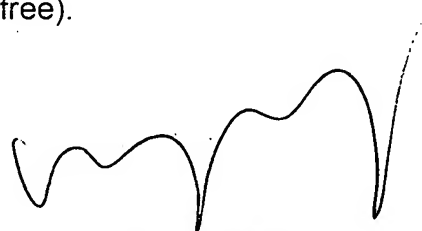
7616. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon - Fri, 8:00 AM - 5:30 PM, every

second Fri off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's

supervisor, Wayne Young can be reached on (571) 272-7582. The fax phone number

for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the

Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for

published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR.

Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only.

For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should

you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic

Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

BLA 11/16/05

W. R. YOUNG
PRIMARY EXAMINER